

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20576

In Reply Refer To:
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February 29, 1984

STAT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Reginald W. Griffith
Executive Director

FROM: Donald F. Bozarth *DFB*
Associate Executive Director, Regional Affairs

SUBJECT: Comments on Technical Memorandum No. 2, "Analysis of
Roadway Improvements Alternatives" for the CIA
Expansion Study

This memo is to supplement our memo of February 27th summarizing the CIA-TAC meeting on February 22nd. It is intended to help focus staff responses on the consultant's study and, more specifically, their recommendation that alternatives 2a, 4 and an unidentified at-grade alternative for the intersections of #123, #193 and CIA's entrance on #123 be included in their further studies. It is also intended as background for the Chairman's breakfast meeting with Harry Fitzwater, CIA's Deputy Director for Administration, on Monday, March 5th. He wants to discuss their awarding of a construction contract for bid package No. 1 in April, their submission of final building plans (bid package #2) around the first of April, and what NCPC will accept as part of the submission regarding the off-site highway improvements.

Although some of the citizens don't entirely accept it, the issues and potential solutions are focusing on Dolly Madison Boulevard and its intersections with CIA, #193, Potomac School Road and Merchant Lane. The consultant has stated that none of the alternatives is so superior to the others that it is the obvious choice. The Committee's task is to give balanced consideration to CIA's needs, VDH&T standards and views and citizen views on their needs and try to reach a consensus on what the most appropriate solution is. This may or may not be possible.

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The following summarizes the consultant's findings and recommendations and our comments to date. However, I would first like to summarize our transportation consultant, Robert Morris, Inc.'s recommendations and the staff recommendations developed by Bob Gresham, Martin Rody and myself. Dewberry and Davis has recommended further study of alternatives 2, 2A and 4. Robert Morris, Inc., has recommended further study of alternatives 1, 2 and 2A. We would concur with both consultants in the recommended further study of alternatives 2 with the suggestion that the citizens concerns about the intersection of #123, Merchant Lane and Saville Lane be given further study as well.

We would concur with both consultants in the recommended further study of 2A (a variation of 2) with the recommendation that it be modified to eliminate the "E" level of service for CIA employees in the p.m. peak who would be westbound. We also concur in Robert Morris, Inc.'s recommendation that further study be given to alternative 1, with the added recommendation to study additional improvements to the Potomac School and Merchant Lane intersections on #123 in order to meet citizens concerns as much as possible.

We also recommend that further study be given to the need for and the feasibility of a "trumpet-type" grade separation with one bridge at CIA's entrance on #123, if level of service "D" or better for westbound p.m. traffic from CIA can be maintained.

The following summarizes the Dewberry and Davis firm's findings and recommendations and our comments.

1. GWMP Interchange With Capital Beltway

The consultant concluded that "under all potential future traffic conditions, the ramp connections from the Parkway to the Beltway will continue to operate at unsatisfactory levels of service. Consequences will include extensive traffic queues extending down the Parkway for long distances easterly of the interchange with the Beltway. These impacts will occur with or without the CIA expansion traffic". In addition, the report states that "capacity restraints at the GWMP Interchange with the Beltway impose limitations on the volume of traffic which can enter the Beltway from the Parkway. The only way to remove these restraints would be to again widen the Beltway beyond reasonable and practical limits. This factor, combined with the abandonment of plans for extending the Parkway outside the Beltway, preclude consideration of widening the Parkway from Route 123 or the CIA entrance north to the Beltway since such a widening would not increase capacity at the most critical points and would thus be of no benefit".

Although some of the citizens do not like them, the consultant's conclusions are shared by VDH&T and by our traffic consultant, Robert Morris, Inc. These problems will continue to exist even after the widening of Cabin John Bridge and the Beltway between the bridge and GWMP that is scheduled to begin this spring.

This is a major problem for VDH&T. Except for Federal DOT's grant-in-aid role, it is not a Federal issue that CIA or NCPC is responsible for or can do anything about.

2. GWMP Interchange at CIA

Although the widening of the Parkway would not increase its capacity (see (1) above), the consultant has suggested certain "safety improvements" to this particular intersection. Federal DOT has already studied this for CIA and the Park Service and CIA has agreed to fund the necessary improvements. The only new proposal made by the consultants is the lengthening of the southbound acceleration lane out of CIA. CIA is now studying whether they will agree to fund this improvement as well.

These improvements are generally considered as a "given" by all concerned.

3. CIA's South Entrances On #193 and #123

The consultant studied 7 alternatives and has recommended further study (preparation of preliminary engineering plans) of alternatives 2A, 4 and "an additional at-grade solution" that is not specified in the report. Alternative 2A includes a grade separation at the intersection of 123 and 193 and a "T" intersection at the entrance to CIA on 123. Alternative No. 4 involves two grade separations at these same intersections. The consultant needs to clarify what "at-grade solution" he proposes for further study. Both existing at grade alternatives, No. 1 and No. 2, meet service level "D" but only barely. We were told that No. 1 had a 2% growth factor and No. 2 a 4% growth factor. Neither is very attractive to VDH&T. No. 1 is not preferred by the citizens because no improvements would be made at the intersection of Potomac School Road, #193 and #123 or at the intersection of Merchant Lane and Serville Lane. No. 2 is better from the citizens point of view at Potomac School Road but not at Merchant Lane. The citizens south of #123 like No. 2 because it pushes #123 to the north away from them. The citizens north of #123 do not like it.

I've subsequently learned from the consultant that Alternative No. 2 is the at-grade solution they would recommend for further study (assuming a six-lane solution for #123).

Alternative #2A does not provide CIA good service during the p.m. rush hour for cars westbound from the south entrance on #123 that want to go west on #193. The merging situation created by the westbound ramp in 2A results in an "E" level of service on #123. This should be considered unacceptable to CIA. 2A should, therefore, be either modified to correct this deficiency or be dropped from further study.

Alternative #4 includes a "trumpet" interchange (a one bridge grade separation) for CIA on #123. Two of the proposed ramps would require some CIA and some of the Scattergood Thorne property. It would provide more than enough capacity to meet CIA's needs. However, westbound CIA traffic to #193 in the p.m. peak would have the same "E" level of service as 2A due to the proposed #123/#193 grade separation. It should also, therefore, be modified to correct this deficiency or dropped from further study.

Alternative #2 appears to be the preferred of the two at-grade alternatives from the Federal point of view. The signalized "T" intersection on #123 would meet CIA's needs. Westbound traffic in the evening rush hour would have adequate merging distance for those desiring to use #193 to the west. Alternative #2 would, therefore, seem to warrant further study as the consultant has recommended.

It is important to try to keep Federal interests separate from state and/or local interests in this matter. The Federal interest here is to insure that CIA has adequate access at #123 and at #193 and to minimize the impact of any necessary improvements on CIA's neighbors. VDH&T has the larger problem of providing adequate service along the entire length of #123 and assuring necessary improvements at all four intersections. CIA has agreed to pay its fair share of the costs for the improvements that are necessitated by adding 1,000 more cars to CIA's rush hour traffic. (Robert Morris, Inc. indicates that there is no way 1,000 cars could be gotten into or out of CIA's parking lot in one peak hour. He said 600 would be a much more realistic estimate). The consultant has indicated that the preliminary plans will, to the extent possible, indicate what elements of the proposed improvements are attributable to CIA. This will hopefully permit CIA and VDH&T to subsequently negotiate an agreement.

Some of the citizens have raised an issue about the widening of #123 from 4 to 6 lanes. It has been on state and county plans apparently since about 1975. It was a "given" in the consultant's study. This is, of course, a state and local matter. Since Federal agencies are expected to follow state and local plans to the maximum extent practicable, CIA and NCPC have and should continue to defer to VDH&T and Fairfax County on this matter.

The consultant indicates that alternatives #6 and #7 have characteristics and impacts that preclude further consideration. The two remaining alternatives, #3 and #5, are not recommended for further study by the consultant. #3 has a grade separated trumpet type intersection for CIA at #123 that is the reverse of that proposed in #4. It has a long enough merging distance to achieve service level "D" on the westbound ramp to #193 in the p.m. peak hour. Alternative #5 has a two bridge grade separation for CIA at #123 with ramp impacts on CIA and the Scattergood Thorne property. It would not have the service level "E" problem on the westbound ramp in the p.m. peak. We understand that the Transportation Committee of the McLean Citizens Association met after last week's meeting and generally agreed on certain goals for the #123, #193 and CIA intersections. According to the consultant, alternative #3 appears to come closest to their goals at this time although the committee did not say this.

CIA and NCPC have a limited role in resolving just what traffic improvements are needed and are feasible in the overall study area. That is primarily VDH&T's responsibility with a major input from Fairfax County. It is in the Federal interest, as indicated above, to insure that CIA gets adequate service and that its share of the costs of any improvements is reasonable.

As a result of this review, we are recommending further study of alternatives 1, 2, 2A and a trumpet-type grade separation at CIA's entrance to #123 that provides "D" level of service or better, as noted above.

Attachments

STAT bc:

bcc: Gresham
Rody
Bozarth
Wilson
NCPC File No. 2303
Reading
Chron
DFBozarth:gef:2/29/84



Figure 7

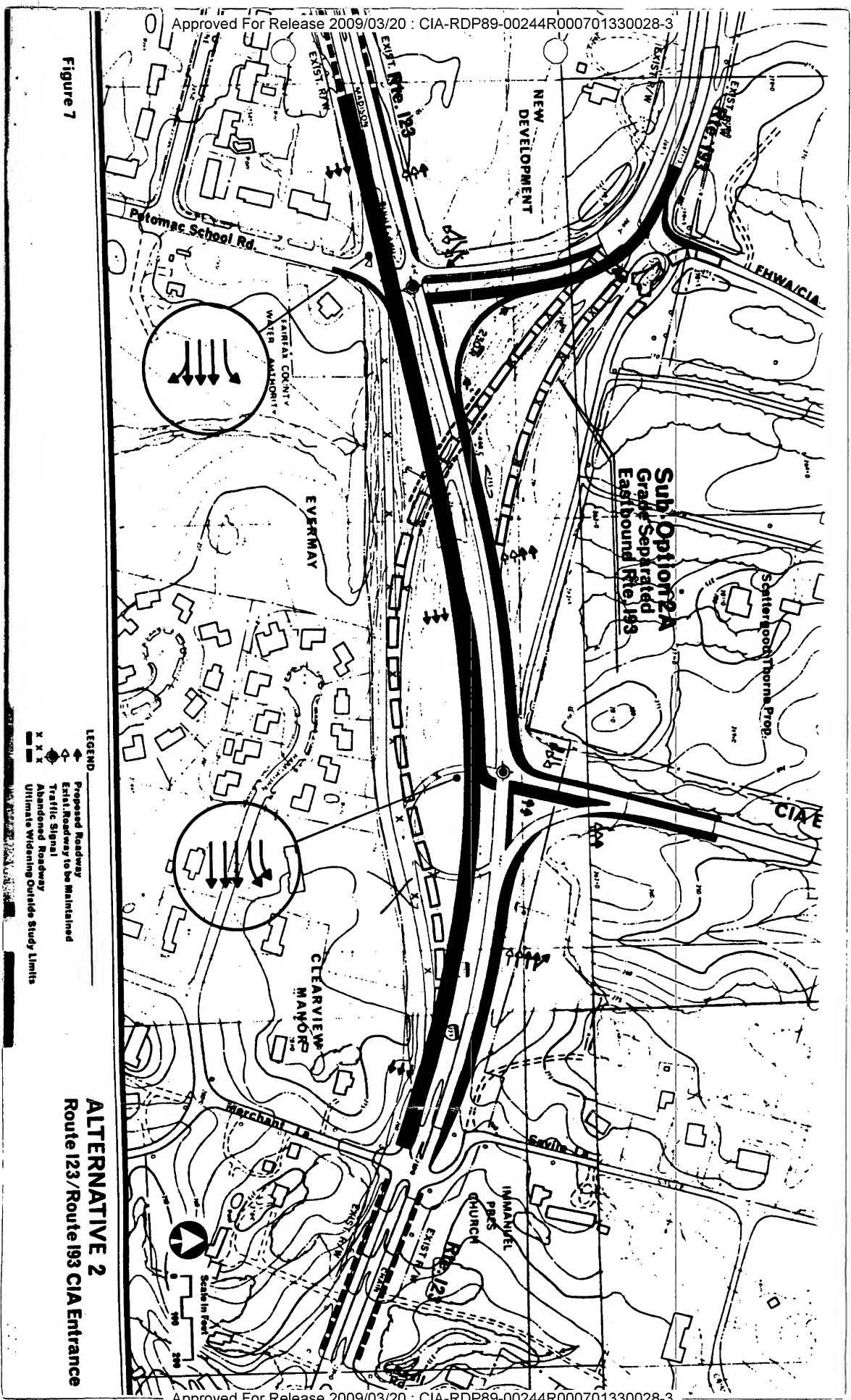


Figure 8

